

Lon Gordon Show Excerpt
Broadcast 9/20/75
Cyril Wecht and Werner Spitz

by Jerry Pollock

Begins with Wecht's claim that the Rockefeller Commission misrepresented his 5½ hour deposition in his report in such a way as to infer that Wecht was in agreement with the Warren Report. Says that to this day the Rockefeller Commission refuses to release his testimony or even to let reporters read it. Wecht repeats that if that transcript shows that he has recanted his criticism of the Warren Report he'll eat the transcript on the steps of the White House and pay for a full-page ad in the New York Times announcing it. Wecht says that it is his opinion based on viewing the autopsy material that there were two gunmen who "most probably" were firing from the rear, but further down toward the westerly part of the building, and possibly even slightly further west than the building. He says that one gunman was probably on a lower floor and one on a higher floor of the building.

Goes into a debunking of the single-bullet theory with a slide presentation.

Spitz says he doesn't know who pulled the trigger but that there is nothing in the evidence inconsistent with the shots having come from the TSBD.

Spitz:... I didn't know these details. I've never read the Warren Commission report before I went to Washington although I had it in my library. I never looked at it, for what reason I don't know. I never had that much interest in ~~fix~~ it. And it was when I went to Washington and saw the evidence I was totally objective in examining this evidence. I have some reservations about part-time forensic pathologists examining evidence about people who do it full-time are apparently not quite in agreement. There is no such thing as a part-time forensic pathologist for those people who have any questions on this subject, because a part-time forensic pathologist is like anything that's done part-time, is sort of of questionable expertise. (he is referring not to Wecht, but to Nichols who Wecht mentioned earlier).

Wecht mentions that he has never heard any of the members of the medical profession who defend the Warren Commission ~~mention~~ criticize one Dr. Lattimer who is a urologist.

Gordon asks Wecht if he is suggesting that the Rockefeller panel was rigged.

Wecht: Oh, yes. Carefully selected. Not in grab-bag fashion, but carefully selected because of their professional identification and association with previous members of the Ramsey Clark panel and/or the original autopsy panel.

Following break Gordon says that during commercial Wecht accused him of bringing him on the show as part of an "expletive deleted" setup. Wecht confirms this and says "your views are well known."

Spitz says he doesn't know why he is being insulted by Wecht.

Spitz: ...I came from Detroit. I planned to go back the same day, and I did my best to get done what I came to do and get out... I did my stuff and that was it, and then I submitted my report. If I was chosen because of some affiliation, because I did my training in Baltimore and because I worked in Baltimore for a number of years, yeah, maybe, I don't know why I was chosen. I have no idea. Maybe I was chosen because

I was Wayne County Medical Examiner and see like 900 shootings in a year, or murders in a year. That may also be a possibility, all kinds of possibilities. I had not conferred with anybody before. I didn't confer with anybody afterwards. I see no reason why I would be on a panel on which Dr. Lindberg would be because I don't even know what Dr. Lindberg or the other guys who looked at the evidence, what they wrote. I have no idea. I never conferred with them. Not before, not after, not during...

Spitz: (on 399) It was not free or relatively free of any marks. It had pieces of lead missing from the most vulnerable part place of a jacketed bullet, that's mainly in the base. Lead is a soft substance. And when the bottom gets squeezed, then lead is pushed out, and a trail of lead like a tail of a group of stars was spread along the path of the bullet, and you see that. And the amount of lead that you need in order to make that kind of a picture in an x ray is minute because the x rays are black and grey or black and white, and if you spread minute little spreads of white which lead ~~in~~ would do on an x ray because you see the shadow and not the actual particle, you would see a smidgeon immediately, without any, you don't need to some great radiologist to see a little smidgeon of metal on an x ray. And I think people attribute a lot more importance to those little fragments of lead scattered along the track, and you have then, or Groden said that they measured the amount of lead along the track. Well nobody can measure the amount of lead in a living person. Connally still walks around with a little lead in his arm. So? Nobody can measure that. What I'm saying is that the amount of lead that is scattered along the x rays in my opinion is in no way inconsistent and certainly is, I find no, nothing in this to suggest that this is not that lead in the amount that comes from the base of that bullet.

Gordon asks ~~them~~ how two forensic pathologists trained at the same place could have such diametrically opposed interpretations of the same evidence.

Spitz: I don't know. I'm only telling you this. That what I have said before and what I am saying today is that Mr. Kennedy was shot two times and that both shots came, in my opinion, from the same location and, maybe I should say better that there is nothing inconsistent with their having come from the same location. Nothing that I can determine. And I have done this game for twenty-three years...

....

In closing Spitz defends condition of 399. He says a high-powered missile makes "a huge cavity." "...A bullet such as this, due to the enormous velocity with which it goes through the body makes a huge cavity. And that cavity has a vacuum in it, into which is sucked the tissue around it. Even weaker bone structures can be sucked into it... It is very impressive to see a bullet such as that go through a chest, and it goes through the left chest cavity and hits a rib and all that, and comes out pristine, completely pristine, no squeezing on the base or anything...like new. It looks like you could re-use it. And the heart is completely demolished. There isn't a heart left. It didn't even touch the heart. The heart was just sucked into the cavity. If you see things like that you start wondering about the situation here. And you don't see it one time. You see it hundreds of times (Spitz is describing

his war service). When you come to think of it it makes a very great impression... Essentially, when you come to think of it, how many bones did 399 break? It broke a rib. A rib? Well how big is a rib? And I'm not even quite sure that it didn't just glance off that rib and shatter it. I wouldn't at all be surprised. So, it went through the wrist. It went through the wrist obliquely. The way I see the x rays and the way I think it happened it went through that wristbone, it hit that wristbone in a place where that wristbone isn't very thick. It's got a big thick middle, which is all sponginess. An outer layer which is hard is thin. The bullet shows an area of squeezing. Granted. I perfectly agree. It shows a beautiful area of squeezing, and a deposit of lead. In the President's neck there are two little bony spicules that were broken. I'm not sure that it broke those by direct impact. Maybe that bullet went two inches away from there, and it was sucked into the cavity. I have no difficulty whatsoever explaining how that bullet came out in the condition in which it was found. That bullet which I held, and which my colleague here held in his hand, to explain that bullet having traversed those structures. I just don't... No matter what experiments on goats have shown, and on a cadaver hand, I have no difficulty in explaining it anyhow. Because I have seen it, and what I have seen happen I think is quite significant...

...
Wecht: I'm flabbergasted by Dr. Spitz' statement. He's seen it hundreds of times, you (Gordon) just converted it to thousands and he agreed. He also said he's seen it all the time... Why doesn't Dr. Spitz then, if he's seen it hundreds of times, thousands of times, all the time, why did not he, and a fellow member of his panel, Dr. Alfred Olivier, reproduce those results? Let's take a bullet and shoot it through a rib, and shoot it through the distal end of the radius, which I disagree with him in a guy 6 feet 4, Connally's size, is such an unimportant bone in terms of total volume, density, and size. Let him then give me those results. I've shown you hard physical evidence here today. Pictures which I did not take, Mr. Gordon which were taken by the Warren Commission...

Wecht says he has never seen a bullet do what 399 did and emerge in pristine condition.